Service of Smith Unit in France

Miss Alice Leavens, who, with the Smith unit, has been doing reconstruction work in France for over a year, was the Vesper’s speaker last Sunday. Miss Leavens said that she went over with the idea of doing reconstruction work in the devastated parts of France, but that before her return she had served in every other capacity imaginable. The Unit first started in a village which had been destroyed by the Germans, and attempted to make some of the houses temporarily habitable and to relieve some of the suffering which resulted from lack of food, clothing, and shelter. After a time they were driven out by the return of the Boche, and the work which they had done was demolished so that the enemy might not find it.

They were then pressed into service as nurses and as “cheerers” for the soldiers who were convalescing. The need which our men felt for touches of home and for someone who could speak English Miss Leavens especially brought out, and at the same time emphasized the best good which the various organizations have done in supplying this need. The Smith unit has been active, during its stay in France, to serve, in some way, men in practically every branch of war service. No service has been too menial or uninteresting for it to undertake, and this is the secret of all success in serving. Miss Leavens said at the beginning that the girl who could not forget herself and do the task which no one wanted to do would not in any sense be of value in the work, which had to be done nor would she herself have any satisfaction in her work.

One of the most vivid pictures, which was drawn during the talk was the one of the people who, because of the guns roaring in the distance and the constant danger of bombs could not sleep and who, when they could stand it no longer took the blankets or, in the case of old people, chairs, and went out on the hillside where they were a little safer than in the city, and where they could get a little rest.

In concluding, Miss Leavens said that there is still much work to be done by American women, but that the work which is now to be taken up will be of a more permanent nature.

Houses will be built anew, not just patched, and villages will be planned for the future, not for a few weeks.

Dramatic Club Presents Its First Plays

On January 17th, the Dramatic Club presented the two sketches, “The Lost Silk Hat,” by Lord Dunsany, and “The Man On the Kerb,” by Alfred Sutro. Owing to the ill health of Miss Helen Perry, the club was unable to give “A Marriage Has Been Arranged,” which was to have completed the programme. In view of this fact, Mr. Currie under whose direction the plays were staged gave several recitations, which were done with that expression and spirit which Mr. Currie shows in all his work.

In the “Lost Silk Hat,” Miss Doris Patterson enacted with much manner-ness and humor the part of the man caller who had left his hat in the hands of his rejected fiancee. In her vain attempts to recover the hat from the house she sought aid from a laborer, Miss Helen Gage, a clerk, Miss Grace Otten, and a poet, Miss Jeanette Sperry. They all refused to help her, so in desperation she at last was forced to go for it herself, much to the sorrow of the poet.

Miss Mary Hester as Joseph Matthews, and Roberta Newton as Mary, Joseph’s wife, played the roles of poverty-stricken parents in “The Man on the Kerb,” with deep feeling and emotion. Both the actresses deserve much credit for their work.

A cast of the players follows:

**The Lost Silk Hat**

The Caller……..Doris Patterson, ’21

Miss Gerardi……..Helen Gage, ’20

Miss Clark………..Francis Otten, ’22

The Poet…………Jeanette Sperry, ’22

The Policeman…….Lydia Marvin, ’21

**The Man On the Kerb**

Joseph Matthews ………..Mary St. Clair Hester, ’20

Mary (his wife)………Roberta Newton, ’21

**DISCUSSION GROUPS TO BE CONTINUED**

A meeting of the Discussion Groups was held on January 14th. A vote was passed to continue these groups as they have proved of great interest and value. Many subjects were suggested for the five meetings which are to follow. These subjects have all been brought to light at the meetings of the various groups, and have been of especial interest to the members.

Winona Young, Marenda Precious and Juliene Warner have resigned as group leaders and new leaders will be chosen later.

Second Senior Sing In Full-Moon Light

Ordinarily one would do a thing more than twice before one dared to call it a custom, but the Seniors felt after their second full moon sing that it was indeed an established tradition.

Not one of them but realized that the stonewall gatherings would become one of their most vital memories of C. C. with the gold moon over the live stone of New London Hall, with the harpoe lights gleaming, with the familiar tunes in the clear air, with the close comradeship of the black-awned group (with the honey-colored half of the cheerleader in the moonlight).

The beauty of all these was increased by the delightful flavor of its being indeed a custom.

But just because a thing is a tradition C. C. doesn’t think that it shall forever persist firm and unchanging. It was argued that all of its traditions may be enriched and extended with each repetition. While the Seniors gloried in the success of their first two sings, they also enjoyed the anticipation of their ever-widening significance.

The full moon and the singing is much too nice to be monopolized, even if the Seniors do have first right to the stone wall and the picturesque (at least in the dark) skies. The Senior songs are the nucleus for college sings—when the Seniors gather monthly to bring their new songs to the stone wall, the other classes will gather about and contribute something new, too.

This will all be very nice in general, and here is a particular way in which it will be nice—it will stimulate the production of those college songs we need so badly. Why don’t YOU fall to and write one for YOUR class to bring to the next sing?

FRESHMAN FEATURE LOLLY-POPS

The first full moon of the New Year beamed auspiciously for the first formal public gathering at Connecticut College this year—the joint recital of Mr. and Mrs. William Wheeler, on Thursday evening, January 16th.

The program was unique in representing various members of the college department of music: Mr. Wheeler, the vocal instructor; Mr. Bauer, accompanist, professor of piano, and Dr. Curnow, head of the department, represented on the program by his charming “Wild Rose,” sung by Mr. Wheeler.

The numbers of the program were well chosen and varied. Especially lovely were the duets, in which both voices blended delightfully. The songs by Dvorak were particularly pleasing—especially Mrs. Wheeler’s interpretation of the gay “Tune thy Strings, O Cryer,” and Mr. Wheeler’s solo, “The Cloudy Heights of Tain.” The old folk songs, quaint, humorous and pathetic, found a sympathetic and appreciative audience, especially “A Rallying Bird,” which Mr. Wheeler had to repeat.

A pleasant surprise in the program was Professor Bauer’s piano solo, Rubenstein’s “Contredanse,” a long and difficult selection, which brought repeated applause from the audience, but not encore from Mr. Bauer.

This was the first of a concert series which includes The Gerardi Trio; Violinist, Violoncellist, and Harpist, all members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, on March 13th, and a Violin Recital by Helen Jeffrey on April 17th, in addition to the Student Recitals and the Glee Club Concert. The series is well worth the enthusiastic support of the entire college.

DEEP STUFF

This is the result of psychological discussion upon the active and passive person.

Passive subject: I’m becoming active; I’m beginning now.

Active subject: Well, will you kindly become active enough to hand me that knife?

Passive subject: No, but I’ll be passive enough to pass it to you.

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A MID-YEAR'S REVEILLE.

By this time we have nosed over the exam schedule for encountered moments of dreadful despair, and we have discussed the immense disadvantages of our particular share in the above mentioned academic activity from every angle. The semester, like a good first act, has skillfully round and maintained suspense and interest (see Archer, pages 64-91), heightening the tension at appropriate times by quizzes and mid terms, all leading up to this grand triumphal exam schedule for uncounted•.

If we were suddenly stricken with poverty, discovered to be absolutely penniless, and in our object misery turned to you, oh, my sisters—yoU, what would you turn away, ignoring our outstretched, empty hands and white, beseeching faces? Say not, "Well, but..."

Now it happens that we have lost what is far more precious than mere money—to wit, our bag of tricks and institute, family—oh, we must get the wishy-washy, out. If I should turn away, ignoring our outstretched, empty hands and white, beseeching faces, I should indeed be monstrous. What dissipated lives other students must lead! Why, they may gather in the reception room with their depleted mantles—mastics—after dinner until the quiet hour bell rings!

How thankful the girls of Thames Hall are that their lives will always be righteous, studious, and exciting, because they cannot meet nightly—weekly or monthly either—in their current state.

Oh, it's a grand and glorious feeling! A. M. A. '21.

DELEGATIONS

Eight Connecticut College students attended the Y. W. C. A. conference at Silver Bay last summer, where they acquired a greater deal of valuable information. Not one of the eight would hesitate to say that the trip was well worth the two or three hundred dollars which it cost the students and friends of the college.

However, does it not seem that this determination on the part of others the students have sent out, has fallen into the habit of reporting that the trip was "thrilling." or the place was "wonderful"? and letting it go at that?

ALMS—FOR THE LOVE OF ALLAH—ALMS

If your mother used to say, "Bake beans and brown bread?" if not, read no further for I can assure you, you will be bored. Furthermore, you will think my paper trivial, foolish, quite as foolish indeed as would be a paper on cremated toast or stewed prunes. But I am not writing for you who think my subject nonsensical, because you, I know, have never lived in that circle of people around Boston to whom Sabbath night, throughout the fall and winter at least, means inevitably beans and brown bread. I am writing for you who have happy recollections when you think of the Saturday night supper, for you who like myself, Tate has removed to new regions, and has dined at a hotel before each succeeding Saturday night when no dish of beans with a piece of crisp pork half hidden in them, and no plate with a dish of cream sauce on it graces the supper table. I wonder if your memories of preparations for the Saturday night supper are like mine.

Didn't your mother used to say, "Bake beans and brown bread?" If not, then amidst much rattling of dried bean pods, amid much laughter, and amid much spilling of beans, you sheltered them and watched the dry pods blaze merrily as you threw them on the fire. In the morning you had to be up early. Saturday was a busy day—the beans must be ready by evening. Even if the baking must be done, the cream must be churned for you always wanted freshly made butter with the brown bread. But in an unbelievably short time noon had come. The beans were baking, the butter in golden pots lay on its white plate, and all the cooking except the making of the brown bread was finished. After dinner your mother made that, and put it in the big copper kettle to steam. Then you were free till supper time, at least you always believed that you were, but no sooner did you become buried in an exciting story then your mother called, "Mary Jane, will you see if there is water enough in the beans, I think I can smell them?" You had to leave your story and pour water into the beans. Yet after you were in the kitchen, you didn't much mind that you had been disturbed, for you were certain the beans to be sure that they were cooking fast enough—at least you believed that that was why you tasted them—you could eat a freshly baked sauce, and nibble a tiny bit of pie. At last supper time came. Didn't your whole family gather around, while your mother got the brown bread out of the pot, and all offer suggestions as to the best way of making it come out whole? But finally without your mother's taking anyone's advice, it came out a steaming and perfect loaf, which the youngest of the family proudly carried to the table, while someone else followed with the beans, and someone else with the butter. Wasn't the Saturday night supper always the jolliest in the week, for you always thought ofSilver Bay and beans and cream sauce, and brown bread.
FREE VERSE AND PUBLIC OPINION

We have refrained from discussing verse, free and otherwise, to any extent in our columns—very wisely, perhaps—but it is a subject more or less interesting to all of us. In spite of a certain popularity, for the most part among novelty-seekers, so-called free verse has not found many doors open in the literary market. There is a demand for optimistic lyrical verse; for verse which is strictly classical in form; for verse in unusual but determined form, such as sonnet or ballad—but most editors are apt to leave the "New Poetry" out in the cold.

There was a time when poetic genius found its expression in lyrical verse—verse with a glorious, lilting melody, as intense and sweet as the voice of the nightingale, varying and full of charm. In the hands of masters, the form was expressive of beauty and truth; in the hands of imitators, the form is mere form, words, sounds—music of a sort, perhaps, but lacking real feeling, or real meaning. It is in revolt against such poetry—"form for form's sake"—that the new poetry has arisen. And there is something very salutary in the new movement, in spite of the abortive attempts that flooded the market as the new poetry. It is difficult to do well. It is crude, it is full of charm, but the best expression of the greatest things in life is the simplest. Some of our ultra-modern free verse is horrid, but some so-called lyrical verse is equally so. Stripped of all artificialities, beautiful in clarity and elemental simplicity, they are equally beautiful. Thought, mood, motive, determine the form.

We have grown used to a certain type of verse, and are accustomed to associate with the word "poem," a certain position on a page: a certain method of printing, indentations, stanza, etc., and so many stanzas; and usually rhyme. And our systems are so ordered that we object to new things, object to having to adjust ourselves to a new order, and to changing our well-formed opinions. A simple theme, beautiful in its nudity, expressive of basic, elemental emotions, seems crude and vulgar to our sensitive ears. It starts us, and we object to being startled. But after all, shocks are very salutary.

The pitfalls of verse-making are many, and perhaps, if in free verse than in lyric, because, after all, form will "hide a multitude of sins." All the more reason, then, why we should not utterly condemn the new poetry. It is difficult to do well, it is crude, and undeveloped, but its aim is to dig down beneath the surface, to thrust off all artificialities, and stand forth in its own sheer beauty—the beauty of unadorned simplicity and truth. It is an attempt to crawl out from the suffocating mediocrity of yesterday, and approach the sincere and simple beauty of our real masters.

Public opinion ances, but that is a

Compliments of

A FRIEND

OUR DARK BROTHERS

Before the United States entered into the world-war there was much said in this country about the attitude the negroes would take if called upon to fight. There was a great deal of speculation as to whether the negroes would forget the lynching, race riots, and shameful arrests of the past. It has already been seen, how willingly they did enter the conflict, and how courageously they fought for a democracy not in the full sense of the word theirs. And why was this? Merely in the hope that after they had faithfully and heroically done their duty they would be given real democracy and justice.

Yet only a short time ago from some small town in Georgia comes the news of the lynching of a negro soldier returned from the trenches of France. On the trivial charge of having robbed a fellow negro he was arrested. Upon resisting the officer, he was pursued and killed. Had it been a white man, he would have been given a slight imprisonment or a fine for a similar offense. Well might those who fell in France demand: "Is this then what we have fought and died for?"

Small nations, weak nations, oppressed European races are all being cared for at the Council of the League of Nations. Is it not only fair that the negro question be considered and looked into? Can we say that the United States is truly safe for Democracy without doing so?

Blanche Finis Silver '22.

The habit she has—and since mediocrity is what she most admires and is most in sympathy with, let us hope it will be some time before she sagely nods in what she most admires and is most in sympathy with, let us hope it will be some time before she sagely nods.

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3
AMONG OUR POETS

What will you write? I answer loud
"A multitude of things--"
From 'ships at sea, and sealing-wax,'
To 'Cabbages and kings.'"

"Goes, if you will, and ensigns, too,
And dances, games, or boys;
Things you have, and things you want,
From pocketbooks to toys;
Whether the campus is a thing
Of charm and joy for eye--
Whether you'd rather watch the sun,
Or see the geese at play."

I care not what you write, my dears,
But only, darlings, when--
Of war, of peace, of politics,
Of mid-years, or of men--
Of movies, gym, or powder-puffs,
Of oats or grass or hay--
Oh write, my dears, of anything,
But, prithee, write to-day!

M. K. P. '19.

PESSISIM

They tell me true love never dies.
But is it so?
They tell me man is faithful to the death.
But is it so?
The winds sweep up and the winds
swepv down.
The moon sails sleeply over the town,
But she soon sets.
They tell me life is long and sweet.
But--is it so?

OPTIMISI\n
The road is long and sun is hot.
But what care I?
Money soon goes and fame comes not.
But what care I?
There's a shade by a tree and a sail
on the sea,
There's the song of a child coming up to me
From the daisied meadow.
Life is short—but life is strong,
So what care I?

19.

EXCHANGES HEARD FROM

Vassar—Several members of the unit
which has been doing civilian relief
work, have been transferred to 444d
in the work of the American army. Vassar
saw $44.50 in one week by turning
lights off during dinner.

Goucher—A sub-committee of the
War Council has been formed which is
known as the Committee of Patriotic
Education. This committee asks stu-
dents to devote regular periods, equiva-
tent to three fifty-minute periods, to
their reading. It promises to compile
lists that no time "may be wasted in
unsystematic wanderings among the
pages of the latest magazines."

Barnard—The Sophomore class re-
cently gave a very successful musical
comedy for the benefit of war relief.

Mt. Holyoke—Flags of the allied
nations have been presented to the col-
lege by the class of 1919. The banners
will be hung in the chapel.

MY LOST LOVE.

My first love—she was slim and fair,
Grey-gowned, with yellow ribbons
In her hair.
And many a time she danced with me
Across the shimmering ripples
Of the sea.
Dreaming beneath the crescent moon
I listened with her to the swaying
Tide waves' croon.
Now I search the painted crowd
Of little ships and cry her
Name aloud.
Oh lovers, can you tell me where
My love is hid, my love so
Slim and fair?
I sit beside the sea and moan
My dear lost love and watch the
Waves alone.

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